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INTERDICTED CONVERSATION.

ALL kinds of conversation will not suit in all places. Human life is such a blotched page, that there is scarcely any person who has not some delicate point about him, which others must forbear alluding to in his presence. Then there are prejudices and habits of thinking in all men, and it does not do to come shock upon any of these in a random conversation. Even peculiarities of professional occupation become causes for the exercise of the good old rule, to think twice before we speak once.

If a gentleman, for instance, has been so far left to himself, as old people say with us in the north, as to publish a very poor book, which is understood to have been a dead weight on the shelves of the publisher ever since, he can scarcely fail to be offended when he hears sorry attempts at authorcraft sneered at, or is told of the great conscientiousness and acumen of the review which extinguished him. The honest gentleman will say nothing at the time: it is surprising how unconscious of pen and ink he will appear. But he will writhe in his secret soul, and regard the individual who brought on the conversation with dislike ever after. If another gentleman has set up a business of some newfangled kind, and failed in it, all allusions in his presence to that business, or to newfangled projects in general, must needs be gall and wormwood to him, and are therefore to be avoided. Suppose one has made some sort of misalliance, whether in rank or age, unequal matches become from that time a forbidden subject in every company where he may chance to be. The most provoking thing is, that one may thus give offence very unknowingly, and be honoured with the most merciless reprobation without being told for what. He may cut himself off from all expectation of honour and profit in the highest quarters by some simple allusion. A jest at second marriages before a patron who has taken a third wife, may defeat the best formed hopes of promotion, or he may be cut out of a will by an unlucky remark on that frailty of well-disposed old ladies which leads them to endow their cats.

All men, it has been said, have some prejudices or habits of thinking, which it does not do to come against in conversation. How often do we see this truth illustrated in ordinary society! A mixed company is for hours quite social and happy in general conversation, when some one, forgetting the well-known caution on the subject, or carried over bounds by the feeling of the moment, speaks favourably of some public personage whom some others present detest, or condemns as a monster some statesman whom the rest regard with veneration. What a curling up instantly takes place! Or it may be that some gentleman speaks of, as an established fact, some allegation which others recognise as only a lie of his party, and then how equally certain are we to see peace and harmony rise from the table! One soon comes to learn in a free country that truth is truth only in certain companies, and may be lies and calumny every where else; and *vice versa*: and he learns to take care that his hearers pass under a certain political designation before he ventures on the simplest proposition. The number of things that it is unsafe to speak of except in one way before certain persons, is as great as that of the veneration and dislikes of mankind—which, verily, are not few. There is no safety here. There would be companies in Nero's time, in which it would have been impossible to insinuate a word on the emperor's mad wickedness, without calling up some one who made it a point of conscience to believe him a vigorous and just ruler. There are polite companies at this moment in the world, in which no one could

imply a doubt of the righteousness of slavery, without being thought all that is bad. An uncivil word spoken of a certain old gentleman, in the city called by Byron the eternal, is proverbially attested to be dangerous. It would have been necessary in Newton's time to ascertain the character of every body present, before venturing to intimate a doubt of witchcraft. In our own day there are manias that carry away men, and of which it is not right to speak slightly without some similar preparation. Were one, for example, to laugh at the absurdity of buying books, not to read, but to possess, and giving large prices for them, not on account of their absolute value, but because of their having some typographical peculiarity of no real consequence, he might be vexed to find that his very next neighbour was a member of the Roxburghe, Bannatyne, Camden, Maitland, or Abbotsford Club, or of all of them, and was notorious for once having given two hundred pounds for a collection of useless old pamphlets. In like manner, the floricultural rage might be ridiculed, when it would be afterwards learned, to the inconceivable mortification of the scoffer, he being a good-natured man, that the mild old gentleman on the opposite side of the table, who had won his heart by the kind way in which he had asked him to drink wine, was a noted rearer of dahlias, accustomed to pay a guinea every other day for some Duke of Wellington, or Earl Grey, or Grand Monarque, or other great personage, in very coarse leaves and very red petals.* You might express your surprise at the existence of such a work as the Heartsease Magazine, and wonder how a sufficiency of rational beings could be found in the country to support a monthly periodical, in each number of which there was to be found nothing but a print of some new pansy—some Reine de Sheba, Jeremy Bentham, or Princess Esterhazy—with a sheet of letter-press concerning those and other new varieties—when it might chance that a principal contributor, or the editor himself, was at your very elbow. You have your own Dalilabs of the imagination, and, as you wish these to be respected, so must you respect the Dalilabs of the imaginations of other men. The like caution is necessary as to matters of unestablished science, where it is of course natural for him who is convinced to be particularly touchy to the sneers of those whose eyes have not as yet been opened. For example, it would be very unsafe to venture in a large company on a jest at the expense of homœopathy, seeing that there might be some gentleman present who was daily in the practice of curing, by means of infinitesimal doses, people whom other doctors had dismissed as incurable. It would more particularly be unsafe, if you chanced to be, as ten to one you were, totally ignorant of every thing about homœopathy, except that its votaries can carry their whole laboratory in a needle-case. It might then perhaps depend on the mercifulness of the homœopathist, that you were not shown up in the somewhat ludicrous character of one who laughed before he understood. The same policy applies to both phrenology and zoo-magnetism: it is decidedly proper to know a little of the facts of both these supposed sciences, or of what their professors describe them to be, before indulging in any thing like a jest at them, lest there should be some one present whose veneration you have been unwittingly offending, and who, having his destructiveness thereby roused, may revenge himself with a little sport at your ignorance. Upon the whole, while it is legiti-

mate to deride all these absurdities of the philosophic world; it is quite as well to know a little about them before doing so in mixed company.

The circumstances through which individuals have passed in the course of life, and the peculiarities of their present situation, form just so many points of delicacy about them, calling for very guarded allusion on the part of their friends. One must not speak of mushroom greatness before a dignitary who a few years ago was in a poor and servile condition, nor of the poor pride of reduced gentility in the company of one who lives much like the starving hidalgo in Guzman d'Alfarache. It often happens that a tradesman becomes wealthy enough to live in a style equal to that of gentlemen of estate, and at the same time contrives to entertain persons of that order, not only with all desirable luxuries, but in a manner which shows himself to be possessed of the feelings and tastes of a gentleman. On such an occasion, when all have been made happy by the best of viands and of wines, and every thing is sweet, pleasant, and serene, how malapropos for some gentle guardsman or lordling, charmed for the moment into the belief that he was entertained by a real gentleman, to let slip one of the established sarcasms at tradesfolk who ape their betters! Would not, in such a case, the very Madeira blush itself into Port! The blunder would be the worse if more particular. Supposing the entertainer to have been a furnisher of human apparel, it would, we apprehend, be decidedly improper to speak of taking measures for any end or purpose at his table. Were he a wine-merchant, it would be quite shocking to ask where he got his claret, and what he paid for it. Had he been a shopkeeper of any kind at one part of his career, the very word shop would needs be prescribed: the mention of such a thing on such an occasion would have the effect of Harlequin's sword, and the elegant room with all its alimentary furnishings would disappear in an instant, leaving in its stead a scene of shelves and counters, with smirking salesmen flying about in all directions, and the host sitting in his box of a counting-room with his pen behind his ear. Things of this kind are extremely awkward. We have known them make all the after part of an evening as stiff as pasteboard, and even extend their influence up into the drawing-room: the death of all hope of future invitations was but the least of the evil. When a gentleman without attainment of trade goes into the halls of one in different circumstances, he would need to be well exercised in caution. Let no witchcraft of well-furnished mahogany in one room, or of silken sofas and velvet carpets in another, for a moment make him forget what his host has been, and that the honest gentleman, in all probability, would like to forget it himself.

It is at the same time a great hardship that so much conversational ground should thus be, one way and another, staked off from general use, the result being that in mixed company there is no safety out of theatrical chit-chat, or a few remarks on the last exhibition of the works of living artists—even these topics being to a certain extent endangered by the possibility that you may have a player or a painter in the party. The talk of mixed company is thus apt to be excessively insipid, so that, at the end of a whole night of it, one feels much like a man condemned to live on gruel, to whom one mouthful of solid beef-steak would appease appetite better than whole tubs of so weak an aliment. Might there not be some polite expedient adopted to leave conversation a little more free! It is obvious that the dread of coming upon dangerous ground must often exist where the ground is quite safe. One must often be prevented by the general

* Our own good nature demands that we do not leave this jibe at the floriculturists in its native prickliness. We look upon the floricultural enthusiasm as among the most innocent of the day, and in reality sympathise a good deal in it.

caution from touching matters which, as it happens, would be an offence to nobody. Such would not be the case, if there were some means of ascertaining what are the delicate points of the various members of the company. This might be perhaps managed by some neat and unostentatious system of signals. For example, if all of one political party were to wear a particular pattern of neckcloth or stock, a company entirely composed of that party might in an instant become aware of the fact, and be therefore at liberty to canvass state-affairs, praise all their own leaders, and tell all their own lies, without fear of mutual offence, and thus revel for a few happy hours in their own honey or their own venom, instead of being compelled, as they otherwise might have been, to touch only on commonplaces. All kinds of persons, having delicate points in their history, habits of thinking, and occupations, might adopt appropriate devices, all of which would be sure to be respected in polite society; for, as we have heard an acute friend remark, mankind are generally so forbearing towards each other's sore points, that one may almost know if any important step he has taken be wrong, by observing that no one ever speaks of it to him.

One other expedient might be suggested, that men should endeavour to be more good-humoured and easy on such matters. The hump-backed man, who was always the first to laugh at his own deformity, and thereby became a favourite with every body, affords an excellent example. Let him who has some unhappy point in his history to look back upon, resolve to think of it, and have it by chance touched upon by others, with patience. Let contending politicians only consider that their opinions are, in nine cases out of ten, the result of a mere sentimental prepossession on both sides, and they will see the absurdity of too keenly challenging each other's views. Finally, let every one be as much disposed as possible to suppose good intention and friendly feeling in his neighbours, and he will be the less irritable when they accidentally trench upon interdicted conversation.

POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

HOW ROCKS ARE FORMED.

SOME of the most curious philosophical experiments of the present age have consisted in imitations, on a small scale, of operations which nature carries on upon a very grand one. A popular view of some of these cannot fail to prove interesting. We shall commence with the celebrated experiments of the late Sir James Hall, respecting the formation of limestone.

Limestone is a rock found in great abundance throughout the crust of the earth. Marble, chalk, and calcareous spar, are modifications of it. Dr Black ascertained that the process, so familiar to us all, of burning limestone, and thus making the *quick-lime* used in building and for agricultural purposes, is simply a discharging, from the original stone, of carbonic acid, which goes off in a gaseous form. Limestone he therefore made out to be the carbonate of lime. It was, some time after, propounded by Dr Hutton, the geologist, that limestone, in its various modifications, had been formed under the influence of the heat which he assumed to exist in the interior of the earth, while a pressure of superincumbent materials prevented the carbonic acid from flying off. This was an ingenious idea, but deficient in positive proof. The object of Sir James Hall, who was a supporter of Dr Hutton's theory of the earth, was to subject it to the test of experiment.

He commenced his experiments in 1798, at his country house of Dunglass, in Berwickshire. He took a common gun-barrel, and charging it with a quantity of chalk, or pulverised limestone, filled it up with brick-dust, and closed the muzzle by welding its lips together. He then introduced the breech into a furnace, heated to twenty-five degrees of Wedgwood's pyrometer. Many barrels, thus treated, gave way, but in others, at the conclusion of the experiment, the chalk was found *agglutinated into a stony mass*, which required the smart blow of a hammer to break it, and felt under the knife like common limestone. He afterwards changed the gun-barrels for porcelain vessels prepared on purpose, and used fusible metal for ramming, instead of brick-dust. He also took many ingenious expedients for ascertaining how much carbonic acid made its escape during the operation. When an escape to the amount of twenty per cent. took place, the contents had no appearance of stony matter; but when it was about three or four per cent., the stony character was perfect. Ultimately, by al-

lowing a little aqueous vapour to remain in the barrel, in order to counteract the expansion of the fusible metal, he succeeded in reducing the proportion of escaped gas to about a quarter of a per cent. The powdered chalk was then brought into the condition of *calcareous marble*, accompanied with crystallisation and other marks of fusion. One specimen formed from powdered spar was so complete as to deceive one of Sir James's workmen, who remarked that, if the marble were a little whiter, the quarry from which it was taken would be very valuable. This particular specimen afterwards fell into dust, but many other pieces, the produce of the Dunglass laboratory, resisted the air and kept their polish for years; nor do we know that these are yet otherwise than in the condition of marble.

By calculations, which cannot well be explained here, Sir James concluded that a layer of the carbonate of lime, at the bottom of a sea 1700 feet deep, would, if a due degree of heat were applied, be formed into limestone; and into a complete marble, if the depth of the sea were 3000 feet; the pressure being in the one case as 52, and in the other as 86, atmospheres.

Sir James spent seven years in his experiments, which were a hundred and fifty-six in number, and he showed in them a degree of patience, care, and philosophic ingenuity, which excited universal admiration when the result was published by the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1806. He was considered as having proved—not exactly that our beds of limestone and marble were formed by heat under a pressure confining the carbonic acid, for nature *might* have other ways of bringing about the end, but that such at least was a mode in which the effects could be brought about. The probability that such were really the circumstances under which the strata in question were formed, is so great, that practically such is the doctrine as to their formation held by the philosophical world.

Sir James Hall afterwards made some interesting experiments with a view to ascertain the circumstances under which basaltic rock is formed by nature; but, as in these he was not the first inquirer, we pass them by, in order to notice his investigations respecting the formation of sandstone. This rock is also a very abundant one throughout the crust of the earth, forming numerous beds alternating with nearly all the other aqueous rocks. Its utility in building is well known. Sandstone is easily seen to be a composition of sand, for it may readily be pounded into that form; but the wonder is, how sand has been massed into so hard a consistence. Sir James Hall performed a series of experiments, which showed at least one way in which great layers of loose sand might be agglutinated at the bottoms of seas, so as to form strata of rock.

"In the little valley of Aikengaw, at the eastern extremity of the Lammermuir Hills,* Sir James observed the gravel which occupies its bottom, agglutinated in several places into a mass of conglomerate, very solid in the centre, but becoming gradually looser on both sides, till it passed into the state of moveable gravel. He was soon satisfied, by applying chemical tests, that the agglutination was not produced, as in some cases, by calcareous matter. A few miles lower down the valley, he found a crag of sandstone, which yields much to the action of the air, and in dry weather is covered with a white efflorescence having exactly the taste of common salt. Combining the two facts, Sir James inferred that sea salt might be the substance which, by serving as a cement, produced the consolidation both of the sandstone rock and the conglomerate. He immediately resolved to follow out this idea by experiment, and after many trials succeeded in forming artificial sandstones of various qualities some of which were firm enough to be dressed by the chisel, and some have resisted exposure to the elements for years.

In his first experiments he put into a large crucible a quantity of dry salt, and a quantity of loose sand; the whole being heated from below, the salt ascended in fumes through the sand, and converted it into a solid stone. The fumes of the salt seemed to act as a flux on the silicious matter of the sand, and, in fact, to serve a purpose exactly analogous to what they do in glazing potters' ware.

Sir James's object, however, was to illustrate the

Huttonian formation of rocks at the bottom of the sea; and he wished to show that the presence of a body of water above the sand, even at a moderate temperature, was not incompatible with the necessary degree of heat, nor the success of the experiment. He filled an iron crucible, eighteen inches high, to the brim with sand and strong brine, the water rising three inches above the sand. An empty gun-barrel, closed at the lower end, was sunk amidst the sand to within an inch of the bottom of the crucible, that by looking in at the upper and open end of the barrel, the temperature of the saline mass at different heights might be seen. The crucible was exposed to a strong heat, fresh brine being constantly added as it boiled off; and it was distinctly seen, by means of the gun-barrel, that while the sand at the bottom became red hot, the water at the top was merely in a state of moderate ebullition. After remaining in the fire for some hours, it was suffered to cool, and when examined, it was found that the sand at the bottom had concreted into a solid cake of most perfect sandstone, while the part above, which was still drenched with brine, remained permanently loose.

Sir James used black lead crucibles at first, but found that the action of the brine upon them impeded the success of the experiment. He found also that the process succeeded with common sea water instead of brine, only it was necessary to continue the operation for three weeks, always introducing new supplies of water as it boiled off, till a sufficient quantity of salt was accumulated. The substitution of a strong brine, containing one-third of its weight of salt, merely shortened the process without altering the result. He observed, too, that the longer the operation was continued, the more solid and durable was the sandstone produced; and hence, as nature has an indefinite command of time in her processes, we see why her products should be so much more perfect than those formed in our laboratories. The presence of the water above was so far from being inconsistent with a due degree of heat below, that by supplying fresh brine in sufficient quantity, it was found possible to keep it at a moderate temperature at the top, while the sandstone below was at a full red heat.

Common sand was the substance used in Sir James's earlier experiments, but he afterwards found that pounded quartz or gravel could be agglutinated into a solid body by the same method. For the sake of negative evidence, the process was repeated with *fresh water*, keeping every other circumstance the same; but not the slightest approach to consolidation was produced.

His theory of the process is as follows:—The first action of the heat on the sand drenched with brine is, to drive off the water from the lower portion of the mass, and to convert the salt and sand into a dry cake, which, if taken out and immersed in water, would crumble down. The application of the heat being continued, the cake becomes red hot, the salt is converted into vapour or fumes, which mix intimately with the sand, and causing a partial fusion of the contiguous particles (as in the glazing of potters' ware), produces an agglutination.

Sir James proceeded a step farther in his imitation of the processes employed by nature. Sandstones are often less or more tinged or streaked with colours, and the colouring matter is generally metallic. A little oxide of iron (in powder) was therefore mixed with the salt, and this being put into a crucible with quartzose sand, it was found that the fumes of the salt bore up the metallic oxide along with them, and the cake of sandstone produced was curiously stained with iron.

Basalt had been the subject of similar experiment so early as 1804. The general character of this rock is well known. It is one of those of igneous or volcanic origin—is generally of a blackish colour, and always of a very hard consistence, being composed mainly of two ingredients, felspar and augite, with titaniferous iron—and, finally, it is often of a columnar structure—that is, disposed in masses as of pillars closely joined together. The island of Staffa, one of the Hebrides, is a mass of rock, a mile and a half in circumference, consisting of three beds more or less horizontal, of which the central is a range of nearly upright columns of basalt, in which several caves have been formed by the action of the waves. Another notable specimen of the basaltic formation is presented in the Giants' Causeway, on the northern coast of Ireland. "This," to quote the description of a philosophical traveller,* "is a sort of promontory or jetty,

* We employ an abridgement, which appeared in the Scotsman newspaper, July 11, 1827, of a paper in the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in which Sir James detailed his experiments.

* Pictet, in his Voyage en Angleterre, &c. Geneva, 1801.

which slopes very gradually down to the sea, and terminates in a point, against which the waves dash with great violence. This jetty forms the left point of a semicircular bay, surrounded on all sides by a steep and lofty coast, which displays, in all its extent, the finest specimens of basaltic phenomena—nothing is to be seen, on every hand, but groups of columns in an upright position. The Giants' Causeway, properly so called, is itself one of these groups, but so much lower than the rest, that the tops of the pillars are seen naked a little way above the level of the sea. The uniform appearance of the upper end of these innumerable columns makes it seem at a little distance like a pavement of polygonal [many-cornered] stones. Upon a nearer approach, they are found not to be altogether on the same level; and in walking along the causeway, one is obliged to step continually up and down, as if on the steps of a stair. All the pillars are nearly in perfect contact with each other, without the interposition of any other substance. There is no great variety in their sizes; the common diameter is from twelve to fifteen inches. The number of their angles is not uniform; there are some with eight, and some with four; but the most common form is hexagonal [six-cornered]. The description is completed by the statement, that the columns are divided into blocks, or prisms, like the pillars composed of a succession of stones in ordinary masonry; but in this case each block has an angular projection at the top, fitting into a corresponding hollow in the stone next above—these projections and hollows generally occupying the whole joining surfaces, except about an inch-breadth.

These objects are the wonders of their respective countries. The country people will not believe that they have not been the work of some superior class of mortals, so like are they to human handiwork. The poet speaks of the cave of Fingal in Staffa as a temple reared by nature, to shame the miniature works of pigmy men; and even the philosopher has surveyed them in despair of ever ascertaining the mode of their construction. Yet this secret of nature has yielded in the long-run to the persevering ingenuity of her children. About 1804, Mr Gregory Watt fused seven hundred-weight of an amorphous or unshaped basalt named Rowley Rag; the fire was maintained for six hours, and the mass was then suffered to cool very gradually, so that eight days elapsed before it was removed from the furnace. The experimenter found in it spheroids, or flattish globular masses, in some cases extending to a diameter of two inches. When two of these came in contact, they did not melt into each other; they kept distinct, but pressed against each other, and formed plane sides, just as soap bubbles may be observed to do when they press together. When several spheroids met, they formed prisms, or acquired plane sides all round. Where the centres of a great number of these spheroids were at equal distances from each other, it was calculated by Mr Watt, that, in spreading out and meeting each other, they must necessarily form six-sided figures. Where the centres were at unequal distances, it was not less clear that figures of other shapes must be formed. Mr Watt further supposed that, if these spheroids were resisted below, but not above, they would extend upwards, till they met some counteracting cause, and thus form columns. The divisions or jointings of some basaltic columns is here a difficulty; but Mr Watt endeavoured to get over it, by pointing to a series of concentric fractures in the interior of his spheroids: he supposed that the division into blocks might be owing to the same law of crystallisation which produced that appearance. Thus what was once thought one of the most mysterious of all nature's operations was so far mimicked in a chemist's workshop, as to lead to a nearly certain knowledge of how the operation took place in nature's own greater laboratory. Staffa, the Giants' Causeway, and other well-known basalts, must have once been fused masses, which assumed their columnar structure as a simple consequence of the manner in which they were cooled.

More recently, crystals like those found in rocks have been formed by Becquerell and Mitcherlich, foreign mineralogists, by means of electricity acting upon a solution containing the ingredients; and Mr Croase of Somersetshire has, by means of the same power, acting with small force, but during a considerable space of time, exactly simulated a process going on in the Quantock Hills, where water percolating through limestone forms calcareous spar. The latter gentleman has also made crystals of silver, chalcodony, and quartz, out of various solutions.*

Experiments like these are chiefly of value for the illustration they give to a very interesting and instructive truth which lies at the bottom of all philosophy, namely, the invariableness of the laws of nature, whether they act upon a large or a small scale. A sheet of rock, extending perhaps underneath some large district of country, and a quantity only sufficient to fill the breach of a gun-barrel, take their form and character under precisely identical circumstances. A few hundred-weights of basalt exemplifies in a common furnace those mighty workings which, countless ages ago, produced a Staffa and a Giants' Causeway. So also did the falling of an apple in a Lincolnshire garden suggest to the pregnant mind of Newton the secret of planetary movements. Nature has no daintiness: she forms a globe fit to sustain millions after millions

of breathing beings, and spherifies the dew-drop which only reflects a miniature of the hawthorn blossom, with the same silence and serenity. The interference of man's busy mind to direct her movements offends her not, and she makes no distinction of persons. She is as ready to obey the call of the simplest child as to act on her own majestic will. She will act in the laboratory of the nameless mechanic, as well as in the bosoms of her own magnificent oceans.

STORY OF MARTIN GUERRE.

[FROM THE CAUSES CELEBRES.]

MARTIN GUERRE, a native of Biscay, was married in the month of January 1539 to Bertrande de Rols, with whom he lived for many succeeding years at the village of Artigues, in the diocese of Rieux, in Upper Languedoc. The condition of Martin Guerre was that of a small farmer, and the property possessed by him and his wife was very considerable for people of their rank in life. Married at a very early age, they were not blessed with children until the tenth year of their union, when a son was born, to whom was given the name of Sanxi Guerre. Shortly after this event, Martin Guerre had the misfortune to quarrel with his wife's father or uncle, and in consequence took the resolution of leaving Artigues for a time. He seems to have found a wandering life agreeable to his disposition, as he never showed himself again at his home for many long years, nor were any tidings of him received all the while by his family.

This unjustifiable conduct of a husband and father led to strange consequences. Upwards of eight years after Martin Guerre's absence, a man presented himself at Artigues, declared himself to be Martin Guerre, and was at once recognised as such by the four sisters of the absentee, by his uncle, by the parents and relatives of his wife, and by the wife herself. Not the slightest suspicion of imposture was entertained by any one, as the self-named Martin Guerre was found perfectly acquainted with a thousand little matters, both domestic and otherwise, which none, it seemed, but the original actor in them could possibly have known. The marks and scars, also, which had characterised Martin Guerre's countenance and person, were all apparent in his representative. Accordingly, the latter was received with joy by the wife and all her connections, and assumed the place which he was supposed to have vacated eight years before. Bertrande de Rols (or Guerre) had in times past shown the strongest attachment to her husband, and her conduct in his absence was irreproachable. She now lived for three years in perfect concord and happiness with him who personated her husband, and bore two children to him, only one of whom survived for any length of time.

This state of tranquillity first received a shock through an accidental discovery made by Pierre Guerre, the uncle of Martin. A stranger, passing through Artigues, expressed the utmost surprise on hearing it said that Martin Guerre was living with his wife and family, and unhesitatingly declared that there must be imposture in the case, as he himself had recently seen Martin Guerre in Flanders, and had been told by him that he had a wife and child in Languedoc, but did not intend to return home till a certain relation was dead. The stranger moreover stated, that the real Martin Guerre had lost a leg at the battle of St Laurent, before Saint Quentin. The traveller's statement was heard by Pierre Guerre, and appeared to him so clear and distinct, that he began to entertain suspicions, which speedily spread from him to the relatives of Martin's wife. A number of little circumstances, all tending to strengthen the notion of imposture, were now gradually noticed by the uncle and friends, and at length they finally became so assured of the justice of their fears as to adopt the resolution of publicly punishing the villain who had so grossly deceived them. But they found very great difficulty in persuading the wife of Martin Guerre that he man with whom she had lived peacefully for three years was not her true husband. At length, however, the poor woman was brought to something like a conviction of the sad truth, and was induced to take steps for prosecuting the actor in this strange deception, who was taken into custody to wait his trial.

On a day appointed, the prisoner was brought into court, where the chief criminal judge of Rieux sat as president, and where an immense crowd of people had assembled to watch the issue of a case which had already excited the deepest interest. Numerous wit-

nesses were present to support the one or the other side. Out of nearly one hundred and fifty persons examined, between thirty and forty gave evidence in favour of the accused, deposing that they believed him to be the real Martin Guerre, and referring to many circumstantial proofs in support of their belief. On the other hand, a still greater body of witnesses declared their impression that the prisoner was not Martin Guerre. Who the pannel really was, was announced by various of these witnesses, but in particular by Carbon Barreau, who recognised the accused as his nephew, by name *Araud du Till*, a native of Sagins in Languedoc. The old man, Carbon Barreau, while acknowledging his nephew, wept for the disgrace he had brought on the family. While such testimonies were given by the witnesses for and against the prisoner, there was a third body of witnesses, more numerous than either of the others, who declared that the resemblance to Martin Guerre puzzled them so much as to render them totally unable to tell whether the accused was that individual or not.

Much weight, comparatively, was of course laid on the evidence given by the relatives of Martin Guerre. Strange to say, these relatives were as much at variance as others. His four sisters unhesitatingly and unequivocally declared their belief that the prisoner was their brother, and none else, and by this opinion they held to the last. The uncle of Martin, again, and the wife's relations, maintained the opposite side of the question. As for the wife, whether from weakness or distress of mind, her evidence was not productive of much light in the matter. What she did say weighed in the prisoner's favour, as, on his being tested afterwards, it was found that he knew all the little secrets of her wedded life as well as she herself did. He told of private occurrences of old date, that tallied in every point with her private revelations on examination. When the prisoner himself was asked to speak in his defence, he entered without the slightest embarrassment on a long narration, calculated to prove his claims to the character he had assumed. He began with ascribing avaricious motives to Pierre Guerre, as the cause of that person's animosity. He then related every particular step of his career, from his birth to his departure from home; and those who best knew Martin Guerre declared that all the incidents related had occurred to him to their certain knowledge. The prisoner described his marriage with particular minuteness, mentioning the name and even the dress of every important individual then and there present, as well as many other minute points connected with the ceremony. Notwithstanding these striking statements of the prisoner, and notwithstanding the doubts of the witnesses, the criminal judge of Rieux conceived the charge to be proven, and pronounced the prisoner guilty.

But this only led to new investigations. The prisoner appealed to the parliament of Toulouse, and by its orders inquiries were entered upon of a still more searching kind than formerly. To show how great were the difficulties in which this case was involved, it is only necessary to state a few of the facts that came out on both sides. Against the prisoner, it was averred that Martin Guerre was a taller man, and darker in hue; and that he had slender limbs, stooping shoulders, and a hanging under lip, whereas the prisoner had stout limbs, an upright person, and no particular mark about his lips. The shoemaker who had made shoes for the true Martin Guerre, also declared that the feet of the latter were of the twelfth size, while the accused person's were of the ninth. Martin Guerre, it was also proved, was skilled in wrestling and other sports, at which the prisoner could do nothing. Moreover, Martin Guerre, being a Biscayan, was thoroughly acquainted with the Basque tongue, of which the other knew only a word or two. These are specimens of the proofs against the prisoner. The opposite evidence seems almost equally strong, and this may be said of the personal resemblance in particular. A cicatrix above the right eye, the mark of an ulcer on the face, a drop of extravasated blood on the left eye, two peculiar teeth, a split nail on one of the fore-fingers, three warts on the right hand, and one on the little finger—all of these marks were on Martin Guerre, and all of them on the accused! Other witnesses in the prisoner's favour deposed to his having alluded to circumstances which had passed privately between them and Martin Guerre, ten, twelve, and fifteen years before. Above all, the bridesmaids of Bertrande de Rols declared that the prisoner had minutely described incidents which proved him to be no other than the man who was bridegroom on that occasion.

Such were among the difficulties surrounding this question. The confident bearing of the accused added to the general perplexity, as he on every occasion assumed the part of an injured and persecuted man. He even made a solemn public appeal to the wife of Martin Guerre, declaring that, as she believed in his identity or otherwise, he was willing to be held guilty or innocent. But the wife would not take an oath on either side, although she said that, under the circumstances, she could trust in nothing that *he* (the prisoner) could say.

Things were in this state of incertitude, when the real Martin Guerre, who had been fruitlessly sought for, appeared suddenly on the field, "as if (says Gayot de Pitaval, in the *Causes Celebres*) he had dropped from the skies." The judges ordered him into confinement before he had seen his relations or any one

* See Journal, No. 277.

who was concerned in the cause. Martin Guerre, as had been stated by the traveller, was without one of his limbs, and had a wooden substitute. When privately interrogated upon some known facts in Martin Guerre's life, he answered freely and correctly, but did not give so many proofs of his identity as the prisoner had done under the like examination. Arnaud du Tilh and the lame Martin Guerre were then confronted with one another. Each treated the other as an impostor; but the first-mentioned of the two displayed far most confidence, and scornfully declared that he would consent to be hanged if he did not prove the whole to be a machination of Pierre Guerre, and the man with the wooden leg to be but a creature of his. The latter seemed to lose his presence of mind at the sight of the other's consummate boldness and effrontery. The judges were yet quite at a loss, but they resolved upon assembling all the relations of Martin Guerre, and all the principal witnesses in the case, with the view of leaving it to their decision on beholding both parties together.

Accordingly, all the summoned parties made their appearance at an appointed day. The eldest of the four sisters so often mentioned was the first to enter the court, where the rival Martins already were, and her testimony was almost decisive. It will be remembered that she and her sisters were the most influential witnesses in favour of the impostor. Now, however, when her eye fell on the lame man, she sprang to him and embraced him with tears, exclaiming to the judges, "Behold my brother, Martin Guerre! I confess the error into which this abominable traitor," pointing to du Tilh, "has led me, and in which he has kept me for so long a time, as well as others." Martin Guerre mingled his tears with those of his sister, as he received and returned her embraces. The other sisters also recognised their brother at once, as did all the witnesses, in short, who had been most obstinate in favour of Arnaud du Tilh. As usually happens in cases of the closest resemblance of person, the confronting of the parties at once dispelled the illusion which had memory only to depend on. After other recognitions, Bertrande de Rols, the wife, was called into court. No sooner had she cast her eye timidly on the lame stranger, than the spell was at once broken in her case also. She became strongly agitated, trembling like an aspen leaf, and weeping abundantly. Then she ran to embrace her husband's feet, and besought his pardon for the fault which the artifices of a wretch had led her to commit. She entreated him to remember that his four sisters and others had been deceived also, and reminded him that her very love for him had its influence in causing her to be misled. She declared that such was her grief and shame when the impostor was discovered, that she prayed for death, and, but for the commands of God, would herself have put an end to her days. "The touching air (says Gayot de Pitaval) with which Bertrande de Rols spoke, her tears, and her beauty, which was still great, the expression of agony spread over her visage, pleaded eloquently for her." But her husband, who had appeared so sensible to the tokens of affection coming from his sisters, appeared insensible to those of his wife. He told her that she ought to have known her real husband from all others, although the whole world had been deceived; and he had the cruelty further to say to her, that he looked upon her as the cause of all the disgrace and wretchedness resulting from this affair. The judge checked Martin Guerre for this conduct to change his sentiments. "The court of Toulouse, also, took into consideration the question whether Bertrande de Rols was or was not an accomplice of Arnaud du Tilh, and decided unanimously in favour of her innocence.

The communications of Martin Guerre to Arnaud du Tilh have been alluded to as the chief source of the latter's ability to accomplish his imposture. Du Tilh spent two years in the other's company in the military service, and was his intimate friend and confidant. On returning from the wars alone, he was mistaken for Martin Guerre by several acquaintances of that person, and this first suggested to him the idea of establishing himself comfortably in life by personating Martin Guerre, and becoming master of his property. Before attempting this, however, he secretly made himself acquainted with every possible particular, relative to the family and history of the man whose name he was about to assume. This step over, he boldly presented himself, and the issue was as we have seen. All these things Arnaud du Tilh confessed, after being sentenced to death for his crime. Previous to execution, he was doomed to walk through the street of Artigues with his head and feet bare, a halter round his neck, and a lighted torch in his hand. As he performed this part of his sentence, having latterly become penitent, he besought pardon of Martin Guerre

and his wife, the persons whom he had most injured. In front of their house he was hanged—a retributive compliment of the law which they would most probably have been willing to dispense with. September 1560 was the date of this execution.

RECOLLECTIONS OF ENGLISH CHURCH-YARDS.

BY AN AMERICAN.

Few things have interested me more, in my rambles about the world, and especially in the old countries, than the visits I have made to churchyards. In this country, the traveller, however much his mind may be so disposed, can depend but little on such sources of enjoyment or edification. It is a sad fault of us Americans, that, for the most part, we neglect the dead. We are inclined, generally, I know, to disparage external appearances. We have a contempt for ceremonies. We are a hard, practical people, absorbed in business, surrounded by circumstances which accustom us to the livelier kinds of excitement, educated and impelled in every way to undervalue and lose sight of what may be called the graces of civilisation. These peculiarities, the evidence and influence of which are plainly perceptible throughout every department of action and sphere of life among us, are to be accounted for easily enough; no explanation need be given of them here. Nor will the reader require to be reminded of the better qualities with which, in the usual order of things, and as a matter almost of moral necessity, they are commonly connected. Still, however, the feeling in question—the want of feeling I am tempted to call it—must be set down against us as a "fault." Undeniable at least it is, that one of the most attractive and prepossessing of all the minor virtues of a community—the gentler graces I have spoken of as neglected by ourselves—is a thoughtful and tender care for the departed.

Here surely we are powerfully called on to borrow a leaf from the Old World's journal. Who that has roamed over those countries, in any thing like a leisurely way, or at all as a traveller should, whom aught animates beyond this restless, rankling, eternal thirst for business and lucre, but has a memory richly stored for the rest of his lifetime, even out of the churchyards alone!—a memory, ay, and a heart too, stored with loveliest images of thought—with feelings that are a ceaseless fountain to refresh the soul—with pictures of sweet, sequestered scenes, reposing in the mind's meditations, all beautiful as in nature itself, sunny and still as the little lakes of the hills, haunting and soothing one's spirit evermore. England, most of all, is full of these resources. Every where the kind of churchyards I refer to are to be found; old, venerable, moss-mantled, in every way picturesque, yet greenly and freshly rural—the very homes of meditation. There is a hearty homeliness in the English character, with all its faults, which delights in these outward observances of affectionate respect for the dead. If the "old countrymen" are not remarkable for a quick sensibility, there is, nevertheless, a permanent and steady ardour in their temperament, which "wears well." Among no people are instances of persevering fidelity in friendship between the living more numerous; and it is the same feeling, the same substantial, homely, hearty character, which, in equal proportion, manifests itself in a thousand most touching though simple forms of association between the departed generation and those who survive through all the humblest hamlets of the land. I dwell, daily, with a pleasure which I cannot express, on the remembrances of these sacred scenes. Not of the "dim and mighty ministers of old time" alone I think, whose

very light
Streams with a colouring of heroic days
In every ray;

nor of

rich fretted roofs,
And the wrought coronals of summer leaves,
Joy and vine, and many a sculptured rose
Binding the slender columns, whose light shafts
Cluster like stems in corn sheaves;

nor of

The crimson gloom from banners thrown;

nor

Forms, in pale proud slumber carved,
Of warriors on their tombs, where jewelled crowns
On the flushed brows of conquerors have been set,
And the high anthems of old victories
Have made the dust give echoes!

These are rich indeed with an interest of their own, but they do not deeply touch the heart. Grave lessons are to be learned from them, but, as the poet adds, too frequently they are but memories and monuments of power and pride,

that long ago,
Like dim processions of a dream, have sunk
In twilight depths away.

These we behold with wondering awe, it may be with a solemn admiration; yet these very feelings but stand in the way of deeper ones. We see too much—too much of man and his observances. Crowds of merely historical associations engross the mind. The imagination and the memory are excited to the prejudice of the heart. No! give me the churchyards of the common people and the poor; the expressions of a nature which deems itself unobserved; the simplicity of a genuine feeling, obscured with whatever rudeness or ignorance. Give me the lone places,

"where there is nothing to be seen" but stones, and sods, and trees, and chequered turf,

The temple twilight of the gloom profound,
The dew-cup of the frail anemone,
The reed by every wandering whisper thrilled.

Where but in such a spot, and in a country full of such, could genius itself have ever penned the "Elegy"? Who but an English poet could have been its author!—one who had pondered from childhood in scenes like those he describes in that immortal poem, and who had laid the dust of his own mother "where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap!" From what other source than a "mountain churchyard" could spring the spirit of "Easter Day," so sublimely cheerful, so divinely true! It was the graces that appealed to the poetess; to them she uttered her appeal!—

And you, ye graves! upon whose turf I stand,
Girt with the slumber of the hamlet's dead,
Time, with a soft and reconciling hand,
The covering mantle of bright moss hath spread
O'er every narrow bed:

But not by time, and not by nature sown
Was the celestial seed, whence round you peace hath grown:

Christ hath arisen! Oh, not one cherished head
Lath, 'midst the flowery sods, been pillowed here
Without a hope (however the heart hath bled
In its vain yearnings o'er the unconscious bier),
A hope, uprising clear

From those majestic tidings of the morn,
Which lit the living way to all of woman born.

Thou hast wept mournfully, Oh human love!
E'en on this greenward; night hath heard thy cry.
Heart-stricken one! thy precious dust above,
Night, and the hills, which seat forth no reply
Unto thine agony!

But He who wept like thee, thy Lord, thy guide,
Christ hath arisen, Oh love! thy tears shall all be dried.

Dark must have been the gushing of those tears,
Heavy the unsleeping phantom of the tomb,
On thine impassioned soul, in older years,
When, burdened with the mystery of its doom,
Mortality's thick gloom

Hung o'er the sunny world, and with the breath
Of the triumphant rose came blending thoughts of death

By thee, and Love, and by thy sister, Fear,
Then was the ideal robe of beauty wrought
To veil that haunting shadow, still too near,
Still ruling secretly the conqueror's thought,
And, where the board was fraught

With wine and myrtles in the summer bower,
Felt, e'en when disavowed, a presence and a power.

But that dark night is closed; and o'er the dead,
Here, where the gleamy primrose tufts have blown,
And where the mountain-beath a couch has spread,
And settling off on some grey-lettered stone,
The red-breast warbles lone;

And the wild bee's deep, drowsy murmur pass
Like a low thrill of harp-strings through the grass.
Here, 'midst the chambers of the Christian's sleep,
He's o'er death's gulf may look with trusting eye,
For hope sits dove-like on the gloomy deep,
And the green hills wherein these valleys lie
Seem all one sanctuary

Of holiest thought; nor needs their fresh, bright sod,
Urn, wreath, or shrine, for tombs all dedicate to God.

I remember a spot among the Cumberland hills that might have inspired even poetry like this. It was the little church (and churchyard) of Borrowdale; the smallest building of its class in England, it is said. Mr Wordsworth, who lives in the neighbourhood, said it was "no bigger than a cottage;" and thus, indeed, it seemed, when, at the end of a long ramble, I found it so nestled away in the niche of a hill-side, so buried and wrapped in shade and solitude, that it was difficult to realise how even the narrow space within its walls should ever be filled by human worshippers. Another such picture the pedestrian may have to think of, who, sauntering along the hedge-lined byways of the lovely Isle of Wight, suddenly stays his steps, unconsciously, to gaze over into the sweet, small garden of graves, clustering all round the humble, but exquisite, church of St Lawrence; some of them, on the upper side of the mountain slope, nearly as high as the moss-grown roof of the building, over which one sees, from the road-side, a glimpse of the lonely sea, spread out at the base of the mountain. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the proportions of this ancient edifice, miniature as it is. The slope of the hill it is set on is so steep, that the road just mentioned is cut into it like a groove. On the upper side, a cliff towers up over one's head, almost perpendicularly, some hundred feet, yet every where, from the moisture of the climate, and the richness of the soil that still clings to the rocks, mantled with a soft, silky robe of the sweetest verdure the eye ever saw, brightly spotted with clusters of flowers, and small shrubs flourishing out from the crevices, and sometimes laden with vines. Below the church, the scene grows wilder. The hill-side shows, far up from the water-mark, traces of the fierce power of the element which sleeps now so quietly at its feet. Huge sea-stained points of crags peer out grimly on every side; the vegetation is withered, and disappears as we wind farther down by the dizzy footpath the egg-hunters have trodden; and now breaks out upon us, in its full volume, that terrible thunder of the surge of even these slumbering waves. But it is a thunder that comes only in mellowed music to him who saunters, as I did, through the noiseless avenues of the little sanctuary in the niche of the hill-side above. Many a time I stayed my steps to listen to this murmur, as, borne on the gusts of the "sweet sea air sweet and strange," it swelled and fell at intervals, like spirit voices whispering to those who lay beneath. No! not to them. There is the "dull, cold ear," that will not hear. To me, to all who visit this blessed temple, this sacred ground, to us, to us they speak. They tell us of the history below us, and of the destiny before.

They mind us well of the life we are living; ah! better still of that we have not lived, where there is no more "moaning of the sea."

It was in this churchyard I noticed a humble heap piled over the remains of one whose annals, as the modest marble at its head recorded them, touched my heart. It was a young, beautiful girl. She came to this neighbourhood, I think, from Wales, probably for the restoration of health. But, alas! nor herb, nor sea-air, nor care of relative or friend, could save her; no, not the yearning tenderness, or breaking heart of him who loved her best, and who weeps now over the untimely tale I read! To him she had been long betrothed, and trusting still in that dear deceiving hope which never leaves us, and which the poor perishing consumptive and her kindred cling to so fondly, till life's light goes quite out: in this hope the marriage day was appointed. Preparations, even, were made for it. On that day she died; and here she is buried, as in her last murmurs she asked that she might be, in her bridal dress! Peace be to her ashes! she "sleeps well" in the churchyard of St Lawrence!

Not very far, but very different from this, is the precinct of the grey old church of Chale, which stands in the immediate neighbourhood of a tremendous precipice, on the brink of the sea, called Blackgang Chine. Deep under this awful barrier, a small snug cove runs in, making what the islanders entitle Chale Bay; in itself a wild and yet pleasing and generally tranquil spot, bordered by a curved beach of shining sand, and enlivened by tiny streamlets, trickling from the verge of the huge rocks above. A man who hated his own race, but yet loved nature, would choose a nook at the base of the Chine for his dwelling. No stranger, at least, would disturb him; for if he did not pass by the edge of the cliff, in the wayside, as he probably would, without knowing it, he would shudder and start back from the sight; there is something threatening, appalling, in the lonely sublimity, and even in the intense, strange solitude of the place. But, ah! if he knew, as I do, its history! Four times, if not more, since my brief acquaintance with this charming island began, have gallant ships gone down, in storm and surge, in this fatal cove.

I learned the history of one of these hapless companies from the marbles of the churchyard of Chale. There they were buried, with the sad solemnities suited to such an occasion, and with all the tenderness needed to soothe their hearts who were watching now so eagerly for the return of a long-expected ship. What a picture of human life—what a passage of human history it is! "sermons," indeed, "in stones!" Six of the passengers were of one affectionate family; a gallant naval officer, coming home from a long service, with his wife, a babe, and three elder and beautiful daughters. The brother of this lady had been expecting them daily. He was one of the first on the island to be informed of their coming, and of how they had come, and to behold a spectacle which I will not describe!

Let us hasten from the churchyard of Chale. The name is a knell in my memory.

A glance at the burial-place of the United Brethren at Ballymahan in Ireland may be a relief to the reader. It is another of the spots one would choose for his bones to lie in—for, say what we will, there is a choice; and the thought of it is no indifferent matter to us while we live, however little the fact itself may concern us or others in future time. The Moravians believe so, at least they appreciate, justly too, the moral influence, the religious science, of a burial-ground. They do not deem it either decent to leave it neglected, or necessary to make it frightful. The little village, which I visited one Sabbath morning, is embosomed in trees, and surrounded with the famed emerald verdure of the country on every side; divided into a small harmonious arrangement of shaded streets, that, but for the neat rows of cottages, and regular beds of flowers on either hand, look more like natural lanes: "remote from cities," in a word; serene, peaceful, beautiful as a "thought of Paradise." I attended service in the little church, and afterwards walked through the churchyard, which lies on the table-land of a gentle green swell behind it, skirted with flourishing and flowery hedges, and spotted over, in hollow and heap, with cheeks of a mellow September sunshine, sifted through the branches of leaning trees. I need not describe the scene in detail. The customs of this sect in the care of their dead are known to all. How truly are they delineated in Montgomery's lines on the graves of the Patriarchs:—

A scene sequestered from the haunts of men,
The loveliest nook of all that lovely glen,
Where weary pilgrims found their last repose.
The little heaps were ranged in comely rows,
With walks between, by friends and kindred trod,
Who drest with duteous hands each hallowed sod.
No sculptured monument was taught to breathe,
His praises whom the worm devoured beneath.
The high, the low, the mighty, and the fair,
Equal in death were undistinguished there.
Yet not a hillock mouldered near that spot,
By one dishonoured, or by all forgot.
To some warm heart the poorest dust was near,
From some kind eye the meekest claimed a tear.
And oft the living, by affection led,
Were wont to walk in spirit with their dead.
Where no dark cypress cast a doleful gloom,
No blighting yew shed poison o'er the tomb,
But white and red, with intermingling flowers,
The graves looked beautiful in sun and showers.
Green myrtles fenced them, and beyond that bound
Ran the clear rill, with ever murmuring sound.
'Twas not a scene for grief to nourish care,
It breathed of hope, it moved the heart to prayer.

Yes, and it fills us with hope, it moves us to prayer, even to think of such a spot. What quietness, what beauty of visible nature, what harmony of rural sounds, what soothing emblems, in a word, of precious and glorious spiritual speculations, and what stirring yet soothing monitors to Christian philosophy and to holy emotion, were mingled with all the more customary and palpable minutiae of the scene! Would that my dust, too, might lie at last in some such "churchyard of the patriarchs!" Oh! leave me not to the noisomeness of a burial in the city; I like not the thought. Let the birds sing over me, if they will, and the green grass spring in the sunshine, and the violet and primrose flourish and glow in its midst. I would have the place no terror, at least, to those in whose kind memory I still might live; I would have it to console and cheer; to rouse, gently, to solemn but not gloomy meditation. The poorest village in the land, with all its rude obscurity, might easily be rich enough for this—richer than countless wealth can make the more than deadly dwelling-place of him whose bones are shelved away in the dull clayey churchyards of most large cities. The poorest village may be far abler than the most opulent metropolis to give what is here desired, for nature, and the love of it, are all it needs.

INDIAN ANECDOTES.

A CURIOUS anecdote was cited in one of our late numbers from "Forbes's Oriental Memoirs," and occasion was then taken to mention the high merits of this work, which was first published a good many years ago. A new edition appeared in 1834, under the superintendence of the author's only daughter, the Countess de Montalembert, and we take the liberty of again making an extract or two from the ample store of entertaining anecdotes which this publication contains.

In various passages of his Memoirs, Mr Forbes notices the ordeal trials, of which nine different kinds are practised by the Hindoos, and which the British authorities are compelled in some cases to sanction. The trials are often successful in detecting guilt, and that in so striking a manner, that it is only by calling to mind the slight-of-hand dexterity of the Hindoos, and the potent influence of imagination, that we can explain some of the cases of this nature. "Residing in a family in Surat (says Mr Forbes), my sister lost a gold watch, on which she set a particular value. Several modes of divination were practised to discover the thief; one was similar to that used among the ancient Chaldeans and Egyptians, and perhaps not unlike the cup of divination belonging to the viceroy of Egypt found among the shepherds of Canaan. On this occasion the name of every person in the house was placed in a separate ball of paste or wax, and thrown into a vessel of water. One only swam on the surface; the rest fell to the bottom, and there remained. On opening the floating ball, it contained the name of an unsuspected female, who immediately confessed she had stolen and secreted the watch. Supposing this to be like other Asiatic juggles, I thought little about it; but afterwards, at Baroche, I attended minutely to an ordeal in which myself, and my head gardener Harabhy, were more immediately concerned.

On removing from our country house at Baroche to Surat, we packed up most of our things, and placed them in the front verandah. An iron chest was, for greater security, deposited in an inner room, near that where the family slept: we saw it there when we retired to rest, and in the morning it was missing. The contents being valuable, and the time of our departure near, we used every means to discover so extraordinary a robbery, in which, from the weight of the chest, three or four persons must have been concerned. Promises and threatenings were of no avail; the delinquents were concealed. I suspected an individual, but not knowing how he could have accomplished the robbery, I remained silent. The public officers belonging to the court of Adawlet not being able to discover the robber, at the earnest solicitations of all our servants, Hindoos, Mahomedans, and Parsees, we had recourse to divination by balls in water, and our own names were included with the rest. On forming a circle round the vase, I observed the man I suspected to change colour and become a little agitated; no other person remarked it, until, on the balls being immersed in water, one only rose to the surface; his confusion was then evident; still more so when, on opening the ball, it contained the name of Harabhy. This person had lived with us several years as head gardener, without our having any reason to suspect his honesty; he positively denied the robbery, and we had no other proof than the ordeal, which, although fully satisfactory to all the Indians, was not so to us. They requested that neither Harabhy nor any other person might leave the spot until we had gone through the rice ordeal; to this we submitted, though by no means palatable to Harabhy. He reluctantly complied, and with all the rest of us put a few grains of unboiled rice into his mouth; it was previously intimated that from the mouth of the innocent, after mastication, it would come out a milky liquid, from the guilty a dry powder. We were all of the milky party except Harabhy; mingling with the saliva, it became a white fluid with

us; with him it remained a dry powder, notwithstanding a number of fruitless efforts to liquify it. He was compelled thus to spit it out; his complexion changed from a rich brown to a livid blue, his lips quivered, and his altered countenance plainly indicated guilt; he would make no confession, and on this evidence we could only put him in confinement under the court of Adawlet, until we obtained further proof. The next day a little slave boy, whom I afterwards brought to England, discovered the bent iron hasp of the plate-chest just appearing out of the steep bank of the Nerbudda, at the end of our garden, about twenty feet above the river, and as much below the summit of the cliff; there we found the chest, buried in the earth. The robbers had attempted to wrench it open, and the clasps fastened by padlocks had given way; but the lock occasioning greater difficulty, they waited for a more favourable opportunity. When the culprit found the chest had been recovered and restored to the owners, and that he had no chance of benefiting by its contents, he confessed that in concert with three other men he had carried it off in the night while our people were asleep, and was in hopes we should have departed without finding it. Profane history abounds with similar ordeals; the bitter water of chastity, and many similar trials in the sacred page, prove their prevalence among the Jews."

Ancient writers give an account of a tree of India, which grows to a marvellous size, sometimes covering a circumference of five acres, and capable of sheltering ten thousand men under its branches. This is no fable. The tree alluded to is the *banian*, one of which is in itself a grove. "They are continually increasing in size, and, contrary to most other animal and vegetable productions, seem to be exempted from decay; for every branch from the main body throws out its own roots, at first in small tender fibres, several yards from the ground, which continually grow thicker, until, by a gradual descent, they reach its surface, where, striking in, they increase to a large trunk, and become a parent tree, throwing out new branches from the top. These in time suspend their roots, and, receiving nourishment from the earth, swell into new trunks. A banian tree, with many trunks, forms the most beautiful walks, vistas, and cool recesses, that can be imagined. I have spent many delightful days, with large parties on rural excursions, under one tree supposed by some persons to be that described by Nearchus, the admiral of Alexander the Great. High floods have at various times swept away a considerable part of this extraordinary tree; but what still remains is near two thousand feet in circumference, measured round the principal stems; the overhanging branches, not yet struck down, cover a much larger space; and under it grow a number of custard-apple and other fruit-trees. The large trunks of this single tree amount to three hundred and fifty, and the smaller ones exceed three thousand; each of these is constantly sending forth branches and hanging roots, to form other trunks, and become the parents of a future progeny. This magnificent pavilion affords a shelter to all travellers, particularly to the religious tribes of Hindoos, and is generally filled with a variety of birds, snakes, and monkeys; the latter have often diverted me with their antic tricks, especially in their parental affection for their young offspring, by teaching them to select their food, and to leap from bough to bough. On a shooting party under this tree, one of my friends killed a female monkey, and carried it to his tent, which was soon surrounded by forty or fifty of the tribe, who, making a great noise, advanced to it in a menacing posture. On presenting his fowling-piece, they retreated, and appeared irresolute; but one, who, from his age and station in the van, seemed the head of the troop, stood his ground, chattering and menacing in a furious manner; nor could any efforts less cruel than firing drive him off. He at length approached the tent door, when, finding his threatenings were of no avail, he began a lamentable moaning, and, by every token of grief and supplication, seemed to beg the body of the deceased. On this, it was given to him. With tender sorrow he took it up in his arms, embraced it with conjugal affection, and carried it off with a sort of triumph to his expecting comrades. The artless behaviour of this poor animal wrought so powerfully on the sportsmen, that they resolved never more to level a gun at one of the monkey race." Under this same banian tree a great chief of the district used frequently to encamp on his excursions in a magnificent style, having a saloon, dining-room, drawing-room, bed-chambers, bath, kitchen, and other accommodations, all in separate tents, while his carriages, camels, horses, guards, and attendants, were all sheltered under its "wilderness of shade." Indeed, during the march of an army it has been known to give a covering to seven thousand men, without any inconvenient huddling.

Mr Forbes gives many curious particulars relative to the birds and beasts of Hindostan. The secretary-bird, a large fowl about three feet high, is extremely useful in destroying snakes, which, strange to say, are usually swallowed alive by it, yet, though of a most poisonous nature, appear to be incapable of injuring the coats of the stomach with their fangs. "An English gentleman, being out on a shooting excursion, killed a secretary-bird, which he carried home with the intention of having an accurate drawing made of it. He threw it on the floor of the balcony near the house, where, after it had remained some time, and been examined and tossed about, one of the company observed the head of a large

* The above is a contribution from Mr B. B. Thatcher of Boston, editor of "the Boston Book," and author of "Indian Biography."

snake pushing open the bill, out of which it speedily crawled in perfect vigour, and free from any injury. On the supposition that others might still be in the stomach, the bird was suspended by the legs, and presently a second made its appearance, as large and as lively as the first. The bird was afterwards opened, when the stomach was found to contain seven dead snakes, with a half-digested mass of lizards, scorpions, scolopendrum, centipedes, and beetles." This passage is quoted by Mr Forbes from another traveller.

"A beautiful bird of Hindostan, the baya, forms its nest in a very ingenious manner, by long grass woven together in the shape of a bottle, with the neck hanging downwards, and suspended by the other end to the extremity of a flexible branch, the more effectually to secure the eggs and young brood from serpents, monkeys, squirrels (their most deadly enemy), and from birds of prey. These nests contain several apartments, appropriated to different purposes; in one the hen performs the office of incubation; another, consisting of a little thatched roof, and covering a perch, without a bottom, is occupied by the male, who with his chirping cheers the female during her maternal duties. The Hindoos are very fond of these birds, which they teach to fetch and carry; and at the time when young women resort to the public fountains, their lovers instruct the baya to pluck the tica, or golden ornament, from the forehead of their favourite, and bring it to their expecting master."

COUNTRY LENDING LIBRARIES.

AMONG the various symptoms of improvement which are at present observable in Ireland, not the least gratifying is that of the establishment of cheap lending libraries for the industrious classes in different parts of the country. As auxiliaries to a general system of juvenile instruction, they cannot but prove of considerable benefit to society. The establishment of these libraries is simply one of the results of an improved kind of education. First comes the school, and then the library: the one is a natural sequence of the other. In this and some other respects, the course of social advancement in Ireland resembles that of Scotland; the only difference being, that that of Scotland began somewhat earlier. It is now about sixty years since book clubs, farmers' reading societies, shepherds' monthly meetings, and such like humble institutions, were established in the more advanced of our rural districts, and unquestionably with benefit to their members. We never heard of a single instance in which they were perverted from their legitimate object of a cheering and innocent means of mental recreation, and it cannot be doubted that in many instances they have created a taste for literature, productive of the best individual and public results.

Burns, it will be recollected, while still unknown as a poet, was chiefly instrumental in setting on foot a society for mental recreation at Tarbolton, in 1780, and afterwards a book club at Mauchline, which was the means of awakening a taste for reading in the district. Burns's account of the "Rise, Proceedings, and Regulations of the Bachelors' Club at Tarbolton" (see his *Life by Currie*), is exceedingly characteristic, and commences with the following preamble:—

"Of birth or blood we do not boast,
Nor gentry does our club afford;
But ploughmen and mechanics we,
In Nature's simple dress record."

"As the great end of human society is to become wiser and better, this ought therefore to be the principal view of every man in every station of life. But as experience has taught us that such studies as inform the head and mend the heart, when long continued, are apt to exhaust the faculties of the mind, it has been found proper to relieve and unbend the mind by some employment or another, that may be agreeable enough to keep its powers in exercise, but at the same time not so serious as to exhaust them. But superadded to this, by far the greater part of mankind are under the necessity of earning the sustenance of human life by the labour of their bodies, whereby not only the faculties of the mind, but the nerves and sinews of the body, are so fatigued, that it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to some amusement or diversion, to relieve the wearied man worn down with the necessary labours of life.

"As the best of things, however, have been perverted to the worst of purposes, so, under the pretence of amusement and diversion, men have plunged into all the madness of riot and dissipation; and instead of attending to the grand design of human life, they have begun with extravagance and folly, and ended with guilt and wretchedness. Impressed with these considerations, we, the following lads in the parish of Tarbolton, namely, Hugh Reid, Robert Burns, Gil-

bert Burns, Alexander Brown, Walter Mitchell, Thomas Wright, and William McGavin, resolved, for our mutual entertainment, to unite ourselves into a club or society, under such rules and regulations, that, while we should forget our cares and labours in mirth and diversion, we might not transgress the bounds of innocence and decorum; and after agreeing on these and some other regulations, we held our first meeting at Tarbolton, in the house of John Richard, upon the evening of the 11th of November 1780, commonly called Hallowe'en."

The book club at Mauchline, which, as we have said, succeeded this first attempt, was established on a wider basis, and with considerably more advantage to the district. The first work purchased for the use of the members was the *Mirror*, by Mackenzie, the separate numbers of which were at that time recently collected and published in volumes. After it, followed a number of other works, chiefly of the same nature, and among these the *Lounger*. It is far from improbable that these works of polite literature were a means of polishing the mind of Burns, and causing him to write with that exact taste which is so surprising in most of his productions.

Since the era of Burns, the number of all kinds of book clubs, itinerant libraries, and literary societies, has greatly increased in all parts of Scotland; the increase has taken place principally within the last twenty years, during which period a considerable number of libraries have been established in connection with the religious dissenting bodies for the use of the respective congregations. These, with Sunday school libraries for young people, the libraries belonging to societies of artisans in the large towns, and the ordinary circulating libraries which are to be found in all the principal seats of population, have brought the means of literary recreation within the reach of almost every one. The expense at which books may be obtained for perusal from most of these country libraries is so small, that it can afford no reasonable plea to any for abstaining from the luxury. We may give an idea of the constitution of one of these useful societies. The members or subscribers are admitted by ballot or vote; the library is the property of the entire body of subscribers, and cannot be alienated without the consent of the whole members; the subscriptions, by which alone, in most instances, the library is supported, are seldom higher than from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence a quarter; the library is kept in the house of the schoolmaster, or some other individual zealous in the cause (not in a public-house), and he is allowed a trifle annually for his trouble in taking in and giving out the books. The general management of the concern is in the hands of a committee of five or six members, with a secretary and treasurer, appointed by the subscribers at their stated meetings. The appointment of these functionaries is usually the most difficult and delicate business which is to be performed. Generally speaking, no book club can prosper unless it possess an active and intelligent secretary, for on him devolves nearly the whole trouble and responsibility. He should be a person already possessing some knowledge of books, and aware where they are to be most advantageously purchased. It is a serious error, however, to give a discretionary power either to the committee or the secretary to make choice of the books to be added. We have known flourishing institutions ruined by this fatal concession in their regulations. The best plan is to keep a blank paper book at the library, in which each member when he pleases may note down the name of any work which he thinks it desirable should be added; at the meetings of the subscribers all such entries are submitted to them, and the selection made by vote. It is only where the funds can afford it, or when the economising of time is an object, that the secretary or committee should be invested with a certain power of adding works as they are published.

Such are commonly the chief arrangements in the organisation of parish libraries and book clubs in the rural districts of Scotland. The choice of books offered for the perusal of the members is generally pretty extensive and various, the collection consisting of numerous standard, or at least respectable, works of philosophy, theology, fiction, voyages, travels, biography, and other branches of literature, including some of the best periodicals of the day. The main difficulty experienced in the conducting of these libraries has been the sustaining of a sufficient degree of interest and novelty, to keep the subscribers together. After the first two or three years, they

usually begin to complain that they have read the library out, and, consequently, the institution is apt to languish and go down. To avert this calamity, we beg to suggest that the library should be periodically thinned, by selling its less available works, and devoting the proceeds to the purchase of fresh productions. The late Mr Samuel Brown of Haddington introduced the plan of itinerant libraries, by which different districts exchanged their stocks of books with each other.* But this requires a more wide organisation and system of management than can be brought into operation in ordinary cases. The probability of parish libraries languishing from the cause we have assigned, is fortunately diminishing every day. So many of the most approved works in all departments of literature, both native and translated, are now issued in a cheap form, that a country lending library, possessing but very slender funds, may add a few novelties almost every week—certainly with the greatest ease every month. This circumstance alone will prevent many book clubs from languishing, and we should hope will likewise furnish a reason for establishing libraries in places where they have not yet been attempted. By a judicious outlay of money, nearly as many popular works may now be had for shillings, as could have been procured a few years ago for pounds.

Our chief object in the present paper has been to call the attention of persons in rural districts and country villages to the utility of small lending libraries, for there are many hundreds of parishes in the United Kingdom, where, till the present moment, nothing of the kind has been thought of. In this as in most other cases, all that is needed is one or two active and liberal-minded men to set the required establishment agoing, and to support it for a time by their countenance and advice. There are few districts where such individuals are not to be found, and we feel assured that they could not be more useful in their sphere than by taking a part in so good a work. In Ireland, as we have already mentioned, village and district libraries are commencing in various quarters, principally through the encouragement of resident gentlemen, but also because the people are now better educated than formerly, and are therefore prepared for literary recreation and improvement. For the purpose of showing what is doing in this respect in Ireland, and of inciting others to follow the example, we copy the following announcement from a public placard, which lately appeared on the walls of one of the Irish country towns:—

"Cheap Lending Library for the Industrious Classes. On the 1st of —, a Lending Library will be opened in W—. The object of the library is to create a taste for useful and instructive reading, to give an impulse to the labours of the schoolroom and the workshop, and adopt every means to improve the learning, confirm the industry, and call forth the intelligence, of the working-classes.

To make this object effectual, the books will be such as will be most calculated to direct the habits and tastes of those for whose benefit and instruction the library has been formed. As it is chiefly through books that intercourse with superior minds can be enjoyed, those written by right-minded and strong-minded men, and which meet the peculiar wants, the natural thirst of the mind, and therefore awaken interest and rivet thought, will gain the preference.

The multiplication of books, and their distribution through all conditions of society, being one of the most interesting features of the times, regard will be had to the means of the working-classes, in order to render this distribution as general as possible. At the small expense of one penny a-week, a man may now possess himself of the reading of the most precious treasures of English literature, comprising history, biography, travels, and miscellaneous works on science, mechanics, &c. Books, once confined to a few by their costliness, are now accessible to the multitude; and instead of depending on rumour or vague conversation for most of their knowledge and objects of thought, the industrious classes may now learn to study and reflect alone, to determine for themselves what shall engage their minds, and to call to their aid the knowledge, original views, and reasonings of men of all countries and ages, and in this way produce a change of habits highly favourable to their own improvement. The diffusion of these silent teachers, books, through the whole community, will work greater effects than machinery or legislation. The culture which they will spread, whilst an unspeakable good to the individual as a source of amusement, a defence against intemperance, and as opening up to him subjects of thought and reflection, will also become a blessing to society.

The terms for the library are as follow:—For yearly subscribers, 4s. 4d.; half yearly subscribers, 2s. 6d.; quarterly subscribers, 1s. 6d.

Rules of the library.—1st. Subscriptions to be paid in advance at the time of subscribing, and at the commencement of every subsequent term.

2d. If a subscriber, through any cause whatever, detain a book or books beyond the time subscribed for, the subscription will continue open, and must be paid till the books are returned.

3d. If a book be written in, torn, or damaged, while in the possession of a subscriber, that book, or the set, if part of one, must be paid for at the cost price.

4th. If a subscriber lend a book to a non-subscriber,

* See Chambers's Journal, No. 17.

he forfeits his subscription; nor will a transfer of books from one subscriber to another be allowed.

5th. For the general convenience and accommodation of subscribers, every work will be accompanied by a notice, limiting a reasonable time for reading it, to which the strictest attention must be paid.

6th. If a book be not returned on the day appointed, the subscriber shall pay a fine of 1d. for every day the book shall be detained; and if not returned within fourteen days after the day fixed for its return, application shall be made to the subscriber for the same; and if it be not then returned, the subscriber shall pay the value thereof, or of the set to which it belongs.—For further information, application to be made to ———.

We wish this establishment all the success which it, like every similar institution, so eminently deserves.

SKETCHES OF SUPERSTITIONS.

GREEK SUPERSTITIONS.

MANKIND have in all ages been prone to the most lamentable superstitions. The enlightened nations of antiquity were no more exempted from them than the most ignorant. The Jews, as we are repeatedly informed in Scripture, could with difficulty be restrained from idolatrous and superstitious practices, and confined to the worship and service of the only true God. This remarkable tendency of the Hebrew nation was in all likelihood caused by their sojourn for the space of four hundred years among the Egyptians, whose whole system of religion was a mass of idolatrous observance. They had a number of ideal gods to whom they erected temples of prodigious size and architectural splendour; the principal of these deities were Osiris and Isis, which are thought to have been typical of the sun and moon. But they also offered worship to various animals, as the ox or bull (hence the golden calf of the Hebrews), to which they gave the name of Apis; the dog, the wolf, the hawk, the ibis or stork, the cat, and other creatures; they likewise paid adoration to the Nile, personifying it in the crocodile, to which temples were erected, and priests set apart for its service. The Egyptians, notwithstanding their learning, also believed in dreams, lucky and unlucky days, omens, charms, and magic. In a word, they were grossly superstitious, and seem to have had but a feeble conception, if any, of the laws which regulate the ordinary phenomena of nature.

The absurdities of Egyptian superstition formed a basis for what followed in Greece and Rome. The colonisation of the Grecian states occurred about the period that Moses led forth the Jewish host from the land of the Pharaohs (1490 years before Christ), and Egypt at that period was at the height of its civilisation and its superstition. The mythology and superstitious observances of the Greeks deserve to be particularly noticed, both as a matter of amusement and instruction. In the first place, they had no idea of an omnipresent and omnipotent God, the creator and ruler of the universe. Their notions of divinity, like those of other pagans, were grovelling and contemptible. The gods whom they adored were imagined to have been at one period rulers or heroes on earth, and still had their habitation somewhere within the Grecian territory, or at no great distance from it. It may be premised that we should have known little of this monstrous system of belief but for the numerous allusions to the gods, their character and pursuits, in the works of the Greek and Roman poets, and also the various sculptured figures and representations which have been brought to light in modern times. Of the innumerable imaginary beings who were thus held in religious reverence, Jupiter was the chief. According to the stories told of him, Jupiter was the son of Saturn, a god who had been compelled by a powerful and tyrannical brother, named Titan, to promise that he would destroy all his male children. This promise Saturn for some time fulfilled, by devouring his sons as soon as they were born; but, at last, Rhea, his wife, contrived to conceal the birth of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, who thus escaped the fate of their brethren. On discovering that Saturn had male offspring alive in contravention of his engagement, Titan deposed him from his authority, and cast him into prison. But Jupiter, having grown up to manhood, overcame Titan in turn, and restored Saturn to his throne. These vicissitudes, it is to be observed, and others that befell the early divinities, were the result of the decrees of Fate; a power over which the heathen gods are represented as having had no control. Notwithstanding this filial conduct of Jupiter, he afterwards quarrelled with his father, whom he deposed and chased into Italy, where Saturn is said to

have passed his time in a quiet and useful manner, occupied solely in teaching the rude inhabitants to cultivate and improve the soil. He was afterwards known (under the name of Chronos) as the god of Time, and was usually represented under the figure of an old man holding in one hand a scythe, and in the other a serpent with its tail in its mouth, in allusion to the destructive influence of time, and the endless succession of the seasons. The rule of Saturn in Italy was productive of so much happiness, that the period ever afterwards was called the Golden Age. After Saturn had been driven into exile, his three sons divided his dominions amongst them. Jupiter reserved to himself the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth, Neptune obtained the empire of the sea, and Pluto received as his share the sceptre of the infernal regions. Jupiter did not, however, enjoy unmolested his supreme dignity, for the offspring of Titan, a race of terrible giants, set the new deity at defiance, and by piling the mountains named Pelion and Ossa on the top of one another, endeavoured to ascend into heaven to pluck him from his throne. The gods, in great alarm, fled from their divine abode on Mount Olympus into Egypt, where they concealed their true character, by assuming the forms of various animals; but Jupiter, assisted by Hercules, at last succeeded in destroying the giants, and re-asserting his sovereign sway. Jupiter is always represented on a throne, with thunderbolts in his right hand, and an eagle by his side.

Jupiter took in marriage his sister Juno, who is described as a beautiful but ill-tempered goddess, and is usually depicted as seated in a chariot drawn by two peacocks. Neptune, the brother of Jupiter, and god of the ocean, is painted as a half-naked man, of majestic figure, with a crown on his head, and a trident or three-pronged fork in his hand, drawn in a car over the sea by water-horses. Pluto, the remaining brother of Jupiter, and god of the infernal regions, was painted by the Greeks as seated on a throne with his wife Proserpine by his side, and the three-headed dog Cerberus before him. Nine of the most important of the deities were considered as the children of Jupiter. Apollo was the god of music, poetry, painting, and medicine: he is represented as a young man, of great elegance of person, with a bow in his hand, and a quiver of arrows at his back. Mars, the god of war, is drawn as an armed man in a car, with an inferior female deity, named Bellona, by his side. Bacchus was the god of wine, and was usually represented as a young man, with a cup in one hand, and a spear called a thyrsus in the other. His name has given rise to many phrases in our language, expressive of circumstances connected with drinking. Mercury was the messenger of Jupiter, and the god of oratory, of merchandise, and of thieving. He was represented as a youth flying along the air, with wings at his cap and heels, and a peculiar wand called a caduceus in his hand. Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, was painted as a female of severe aspect, armed on the head and breast, and bearing a spear and shield, while an owl sits by her side. Venus, the goddess of beauty and love, was depicted as a handsome woman, in undress. Diana, the goddess of hunting and of chastity, appeared as a beautiful female, with bow and arrow in her hands, busking on her limbs, and a crescent on her forehead. Hebe, the goddess of youth, took the form of a blooming young girl, and was said to bear the cup of Jupiter. Another of the children of Jupiter was Vulcan, who, being of ungainly form, and disagreeable in the eyes of his father, was cruelly thrust by him out of heaven, so that he fell on the island of Lesbos, and, breaking a limb, was lame ever after. On earth Vulcan employed himself as an artificer in iron, and hence he has been assumed as the patron of blacksmiths. Jupiter is said to have employed him in fabricating his thunderbolts. The gay goddess Venus is represented as married to this homely deity, to whom she occasioned much uneasiness by the levity of her conduct. The workshop of Vulcan was believed to be underneath the burning mountain Ætna, in Sicily; and the term *volcano* is derived from that circumstance.

Besides the other attributes and avocations of Apollo, he was the deity of the Sun, having the task confided to him of guiding that luminary in its diurnal course through the heavens. His sister, Diana, had a similar charge over the moon. Apollo, or Phoebus, as he was also named, had a son called Phaethon, who, being, like many other young people, self-confident and rash, took advantage of the indulgent disposition of his father to obtain from him the charge of the chariot of the sun for one day. But Phaethon had not travelled far on his journey up the heavens, when his fiery steeds became unmanageable, and, running away with the sun, they descended so close to the earth, that that body was set on fire. Jupiter perceived what had happened, and fearing that the whole universe would be consumed, he struck Phaethon dead with a thunderbolt; then, after a good deal of trouble, he extinguished the dangerous conflagration, and set the sun once more on its usual course. Notwithstanding Apollo's care of the sun, that luminary, on its rising, was the special charge of Aurora, who was called the goddess of the morning or dawn—hence the common flowery expression, “the beams of Aurora rising in the east, tipping the distant hills with their golden hues.” None of the heathen deities is more frequently referred to than Cupid, the god of love. He was the son of Venus, and bore the aspect of a beautiful boy.

He had a pair of wings, and was furnished with a bow and a quiver of arrows, which he shot into the hearts of those whom he wished to inflame with the tender passion over which he had control. So great was his power, that he could tame the most ferocious animals, and break in pieces the thunderbolts of Jupiter himself.

There was a number of divinities of minor importance. Hymen was the god of marriage, and was represented with a crown of flowers on his head, and a lighted torch in his hand. Æolus was the god of the winds, which he kept confined in caverns, except at such times as he chose to let them loose upon the world. Pan was the god of the country. He was flat-nosed and horned, and he had legs, feet, and a tail, resembling those of a goat. His favourite haunt was the vales of Arcadia, where he attracted the shepherds around him in admiration by the sweet sounds of his rustic pipe. Ceres was the goddess of agriculture, and had a beautiful daughter, named Proserpine, who was carried off by Pluto while she was gathering flowers on the plains of Sicily, and installed as the queen of the infernal regions. Ceres, in despair at the loss of her daughter, and uncertain as to her fate, lighted a torch at Mount Ætna, and sought for her over the whole earth. In the course of her wanderings she arrived in Attica, and, finding its inhabitants ignorant of husbandry, furnished them with grain, and taught them how to cultivate their fields. She at the same time instituted the secret religious ceremonies at Eleusis, which were afterwards known by the name of the *Eleusinian Mysteries*. Ceres then continued her search for her daughter, and at length obtained information of what had happened to her. She immediately ascended to heaven, and demanded redress from Jupiter, who promised to compel Pluto to restore Proserpine, provided she had eaten nothing since her descent into hell. On inquiry, it was ascertained that she had eaten some pomegranates, so that her return to the upper world was, according to the laws of the infernal regions, impracticable. But Jupiter, compassionating her disconsolate parent, ordained that Proserpine should divide her time between her mother and her husband, residing six months with each, alternately. Astræa was the goddess of justice, and during the golden age, when men were virtuous and happy, she dwelt, like many other deities, on earth; but after the world became wicked, she bade it a sorrowful farewell, and, ascending to heaven, was transformed into the sign of the zodiac which is named *Virgo*, or the Virgin. Themis was the goddess of law, and, after the departure of Astræa, she had also to sustain, as well as she was able, the character of the goddess of justice. We see in this, as in some other fables, no small degree of meaning.

Inexorable destiny, which governs all things, was personified by three sisters, called the *Fates*, who represented the Past, the Present, and the Future. They were poetically described as constantly employed in spinning the thread of human life. One held the distaff, another spun, and the third cut the thread when it had reached its appointed length. To the decrees of these stern sisters even Jupiter himself was obliged to bend, and his thunders, which frightened all the other divinities, were heard by them undisturbed. The *Furies* were also three in number, and to them belonged the task of punishing the guilty both on earth and in hell. Instead of hair, their heads were covered with serpents, and their looks were fierce and terrible. Each of the sister-furies waved a torch in one hand, while the other wielded a scourge. The latter instrument inflicted remorseless punishment on those who had incurred the anger of the gods. Wars, famine, and pestilence—the penalty of vice and crime—proceeded from these dread sisters, and *Grief*, *Terror*, and *Madness*, were painted as their inseparable followers. These avengers of guilt form a striking contrast to another sisterly trio, to whom the ancients gave the name of the *Graces*. The *Graces* were named Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne, and their aspect and attributes corresponded with the common name they bore. They were the daughters of Bacchus and Venus, and were usually represented as unattired, and linked in each other's arms. The nine *Muses* were named Thalia, Melpomene, Calliope, Clio, Erato, Euterpe, Polyhymnia, Terpsichore, and Urania. They were the patronesses of literature and the fine arts, and resided on Parnassus, a lofty mountain in the district of Phocis. Thalia presided over comedy; Melpomene over tragedy; Erato over amatory poetry; Polyhymnia over lyric poetry; Calliope over heroic or epic poetry and eloquence; Clio over history; Euterpe over music; Terpsichore over dancing; and Urania over the study of astronomy.

There was a class of demi-gods, who filled imaginary places in every corner both of earth and sea. The shady groves and flowery vales were peopled by Dryads or wood-nymphs, and Satyrs, a species of rural deities, who, like Pan, had the horns, legs, and feet of a goat. Mountains and streams possessed their guardian gods and goddesses, and every fountain had its Naiad or water-nymph. The lively imagination of the Greeks made them consider the thunder as the voice of Jupiter; the soft breezes of summer were to them the movement of the wing of Æolus; the echo of the forest was the voice of a goddess, and the gentle murmur of the streamlet sounded as the tones of its presiding deity. In short, whatever sound or sight in nature charmed their fancy, the Greeks ascribed the pleasure to the agency of unseen, but beautiful and

immortal, beings. Even the meanest things and offices had their presiding deities; there was a goddess of common sewers and sinks. Beyond this it would be impossible to go.

Whether the deities of the Greeks were of superior or inferior importance, they were believed to mingle invisibly in the affairs of mortals, and frequently to lend their assistance in the promotion of schemes of vice and villany. They were animated by envy, malice, and all the evil passions to which men are subject, and they did not hesitate to adopt any measures, however base, to gratify their nefarious purposes. Even Jupiter, the king of heaven, is described as having acted a very profligate part. A belief in immortality, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, formed a part of the Greek religion. Immortality was figured in their temples by a butterfly (called *Psyche*), that animal, by its transformations, being, as they thought, typical of the changes which the human being must undergo. They imagined, that, after death, the souls of men descended to the shores of a dismal and pestilential stream, called the *Styx*, where Charon, a grim-looking personage, acted as ferryman, and rowed the spirits of the dead across the melancholy river, the boundary of the dominions of Pluto. To obtain a passage in Charon's boat, it was necessary that the deceased should have been buried. Those who were drowned at sea, or who were in any other manner deprived of the customary rites of sepulture, were compelled to wander about on the banks of the *Styx* for a hundred years, before being permitted to cross it. After quitting the vessel of Charon, the trembling shades advanced to the palace of Pluto, the gate of which was guarded by a monstrous dog, named *Cerberus*, which had three heads, and a body covered with snakes instead of hair. They then appeared before *Minos*, *Rhadamanthus*, and *Acanthus*, the three judges of the infernal regions, by whom the wicked were condemned to torments, and the good rewarded with heavenly pleasures.

Tartarus, the place of punishment, was the abode of darkness and horror. There *Tantalus*, for a vile crime done in life, remained perpetually surrounded with water, which fled from his lips whenever he attempted to quench his burning thirst, while over his head hung branches laden with the most inviting fruits, which shrunk from his grasp as often as he stretched out his hand to pluck them. There also was *Ixion* bound with serpents to the rim of a wheel, which, constantly revolving, allowed no cessation of his agonies. Another variety of punishment was allotted to *Sisyphus*, who was condemned to the endless task of rolling a huge stone up the side of a steep mountain, which he had no sooner accomplished than it rolled down again to its former place. On one side criminals were writhing under the merciless lash of the avenging furies, and on another were to be seen wretches surrounded with unquenchable flames. *Elysium*, the abode of the blessed, was a region of surpassing loveliness and pleasure. Groves of the richest verdure, and streams of silvery clearness, were to be met with on every side. The air was pure, serene, and temperate; the birds continually warbled in the woods, and a brighter light than that of the sun was diffused throughout that happy land. No cares nor sorrow could disturb its inhabitants, who spent their time in the enjoyment of those pleasures they had loved on earth, or in admiring the wisdom and power of the gods.

The Greeks were pre-eminently an imaginative people, and, accordingly, both their mythology and their religious rites were calculated rather to amuse the fancy than to interest or improve the understanding. Their public worship was altogether ceremonial. In magnificent temples they invoked and offered sacrifices to the gods, and the solemn festivals of their religion consisted of pompous processions, public games, dramatic entertainments, feasting, and masquerading. To these were added, in the worship of *Bacchus*, drunkenness, indecency, uproar, and every species of licentiousness. It was no business of the priests to inculcate lessons of morality; the only doctrine taught by them was, that the gods demanded slavish adulation, and an outward show of reverence from their worshippers, who would be rewarded with the divine favour in proportion to the abundance and costliness of their offerings. Besides the public services of religion, there were certain secret rites, performed only by the initiated, in honour of particular divinities. The most remarkable of these mystical observances were the feasts celebrated at *Eleusis*, in *Attica*, in honour of the goddess *Ceres*. They were called, by way of eminence, the *Mysteries*; and all who were initiated in them, were bound by the most solemn oaths never to reveal them. The Athenians alone were admissible to the *Eleusinian* rites, and they were very careful to avail themselves of their peculiar privilege, believing that those who died without initiation would be condemned to wallow for ever in mud and filth in the infernal regions. The penalty of death was denounced against all who should divulge these mysteries, or who should witness them without being regularly initiated; but, notwithstanding the rigorous manner in which this law was enforced, sufficient disclosures have been made concerning them, to prove that they consisted principally of such mystical ceremonies, and optical delusions, as were fitted to excite the superstitious veneration and dread of the bewildered votaries. Processions, gymnastic contests, music, and dancing, constituted an indispensable part

of this religious festival, as of others, and the nocturnal orgies of the devotees were scarcely less extravagant and immoral than those of the *Bacchanals*.

The gods were supposed to communicate with men, and to reveal the secrets of futurity by means of oracles, several of which existed in various parts of Greece. An account of these oracles, and other parts of the Greek, as well as the Roman, superstition, will form the subject of another sketch.

A MAIL-COACH ADVENTURE OF CHARLES MATHEWS.

THE following anecdote occurs in Mrs Mathews's delightful *Memoirs* of her late husband, of which the second couple of volumes are just published:—"Mr Mathews, on his way homewards from the north, just after the assizes, on entering the mail, was fortunate enough to find only two gentlemen, who, being seated opposite to each other, left him the fourth seat for his legs. * * * The passengers were very agreeable men; one, a Scotchman—always a safe card. At the close of the evening the latter encased his head and throat in an enormous fold of white linen, and then sank back to sleep, looking like the veiled prophet; while the other, an Englishman, was characteristically satisfied with a 'comfortable.' * * * Just as the trio had sunk into their first forgetfulness, they were awakened by the sudden stoppage of the vehicle, a light at the door of an inn, and a party of rough discordant voices, bidding, however, a cordial farewell to a large, bearded, and ominous-looking stranger, who, in a broad Yorkshire dialect, wished his companions 'a good night,' reminding them that he had paid his share of the reckoning. To the great discomfiture of our three *insides*, the door of the mail was opened, and the fourth passenger invited by the guard to enter without further loss of time. Since the three gentlemen had 'dropped off,' the weather had suddenly changed from frost to snow. A heavy sleet had fallen, and the man I have mentioned quitted the open air, and entered the coach with, appropriately enough, a frieze coat on, powdered all over by the snow. * * * All were disconcerted at this intrusion, and sufficiently chilled and disturbed to be in a very ill-humour with the odious fourth. They, however, seemed tacitly to agree not to speak to the new comer, but endeavour to regain their former happy unconsciousness. They had not, however, been spending a jovial evening, as he had whose 'absence' they would have 'doated upon.' He was in any thing but a sleeping mood; and after a few minutes' rustling about, in order to settle himself, treading upon my husband's toes, elbowing his neighbour, without begging pardon for his so doing, &c. (all which was received with a sullen silence), he asked, in a voice which sounded like thunder to the sleepers, while he held the pull of the window in one hand, 'Company! oop or down?' Answer made they none. Again he inquired, still dubious of what might be 'agreeable,' and desirous to prove himself a polished gentleman, 'Company! oop or down?' Still receiving no answer, a smothered oath bespoke his disgust at such un courteous return for his polite consideration for his fellow-passengers; and, with some exasperation of tone, he repeated aloud, 'I say, Company—oop or—down?' Still not a word; and with another exclamation, he allowed 't'window' to remain down. It was clear to the half-perceptions of the drowsy travellers that he of the frieze coat had laid in enough spirit to keep him from chilliness, and they hoped the potency of his precaution would soon make him unconscious, as they were disposed to be. But, no; he continued restless and talkative. All at once, however, a

"Change came o'er the spirit of his dream;"

he, it appeared, for the first time, perceived the alteration in the weather. His excitement at the door of the little inn, where he had left his friends, had caused him totally to overlook the snow which then fell upon him; and he saw it now with a degree of stupid wonder, and exclaimed, in audible soliloquy, 'Eh!—what's this? whoigh! the whole country's covered wi' snow!—eh! it's awful. Company!—wake up and see t' snow!—eh! they're all asleep. Whoigh, it's wonderful and awful! What a night—what a night! Eh! God preserve all poor mariners on the western coast this night!' Then roaring out once more, with increased vehemence of tone, 'Company! wake oop, I say, and see t'night!' * * * In this manner did he go on, until the patience of the English gentleman was tired out, and he at length spoke: 'I wish, sir, you'd show some feeling for us, and hold your tongue. We were all asleep when you came in, and you have done nothing but talk and disturb us ever since. You're a positive nuisance.' 'Eh!' said he of the frieze coat; 'I like that, indeed! Aw've as much right here, I reckon, as others—aw've paid my fare, ha'n't I?' said he (his voice rising as he remembered his claims to consideration). 'Aw'm a respectable man—my name's John Luckie—I owes nobody anything. I pays king's taxes—I'm a respectable man, I say. Aw help to support church and state.' On he went, with all the senseless swagger of cup valour and self-landation, till he of the 'comfortable' again grumbled out his anger. Again the huge drover (for such he was) thundered forth his rights and summed up his title to respect: 'Eh! whoigh! what have I done? I coom'd into t' coach loike a gentleman, didn't I? I was civil, wasn't I? I said, Company, oop or down? But none o' ye had the politeness to answer: ye were not loike gentlemen!!' * * * At length his sense of oppression became so strong, that his independence reached its climax, and he boldly declared that he would not hold his tongue, or be quiet—no, not though Baron Hullock, or the great Mr Brougham (or, as he pronounced the name, Mr Bruffem), himself was in t' coach. My husband, who found all tendency to sleep broken up by this obstreperous fellow, now conceived a desire to amuse himself with his fellow-passenger. Just, therefore, as John Luckie's last declaration was uttered, Mr Mathews leant forward to him, and in a half whisper said, with affected caution, 'Hush! you are not aware,

but you have been speaking all this time to Baron Hullock himself!' The drover seemed to quail under this intimation. 'Whoigh! you don't say so?' 'Fact, I assure you; and the opposite to him is Lady Hullock!' (The Scotchman in the white drapery over his head began to titter at this.) 'Whoigh! you don't tell me that! Eh! what shall I do? Art thou sure?' 'I am indeed,' said Mr Mathews; 'they are Baron and Lady Hullock, and I am Mr Brougham.' 'Eh!' roared the man in a tone of actual terror, 'let me go! let me go! (struggling to open the coach door), let me go! I'm no company for sitch gentlefolks; aw've no book-larning; I'm no but John Luckie. Let me get out—here, guard! Stop! stop! I won't roide here ony longer!' The guard was insensible to this, and on went the coach, and still John Luckie struggled; and in his rough and clumsy movements a little of my husband's ventriloquy proved a useful auxiliary to urge his welcome departure; and a child suddenly cried out as if hurt. 'Eh! what, is there a bairn i' t' coach too? Eh! my Lord Baron, pray forgive me; I meant no offence. My name's John Luckie. Aw'm a respectable mon, pays king's taxes. I said, Company, oop or down? I meant to be civil. Eh! my Lady Hullock, I hope I've not hurt thy bairn.' The child's cries now increased. 'Eh! ma poor bairn, where art thee? What moost I do! Guard! stop and let me out! Eh! what a night! Guard! I'm not fit company for Baron Hullock and Mr Bruffem, I know. Let me out, I say!' At last his voice at the window reached the higher powers, and the coach stopped, and as soon as rolled this porpoise of a man, who again begged the *baron* and his lady to overlook his inadvertency, and asking pardon of 'Mr Bruffem,' he was with some difficulty hoisted upon the top of the mail, and off it drove. The two inside gentlemen (who had been trying to stifle their amusement) now laughed outright, and thanking Mr Mathews for his device, they all three recomposed themselves, now and then catching by the wind a broken phrase from John Luckie, as he gave vent to his feelings to the coachman and guard—'Baron Hullock!—Respectable mon!—Bairn!—Oop or down!—My Lady Hullock!—Mr Bruffem!—Church and State, &c.; all which must have puzzled his listeners without, who doubtless attributed his account to the quantity of rum-toddy which they might suppose had filled his brain with such unreal mockeries."

THE MARQUESS OF WELLESLEY.

The Earl of Mornington, father of the Marquess Wellesley and of the Duke of Wellington, died several thousand pounds in debt. By virtue of a peculiar law, his property was inherited by his eldest son, the Marquess Wellesley, without being liable for the payment of his debts. The Marquess, nevertheless, from a conscientious spirit, resolved to discharge all these debts, before he should allow himself fully to enjoy the family property. He lived for a few years with rigid economy, and thus saved enough of money to pay every farthing which his father had owed. Among the creditors of the deceased earl, was one who applied for the payment of £150. The young lord, upon examination, found that it had been transferred by a poor old man, to whom it was originally due, to the present possessor, for the small sum of £50. "I will deal justly with you," said his lordship, "but I will do no more. Here are the fifty pounds you paid for the bond, and legal interest for the time it has been in your possession." The holder, knowing that he could not strictly claim a single shilling, was content with not losing any thing. But the noble lord, who thus gave an early proof of that honour and integrity which he afterwards displayed largely in offices of the highest trust, did not stop here; he sought out the original holder of the bill, and, finding him poor, paid him the whole sum, with a large arrear of interest.—*Moral Class-Book.*

VACCINATION.

The author of a paper on this subject, in the Medical Gazette, suggests that in the event of small-pox breaking out epidemically in a town or village, isolated or cut off from communication with other towns and villages by any imaginable cause, and that the disease was raging fearfully around, whilst the prophylactic (vaccine fluid) had entirely died out of use and disappeared, in such a case all that would be necessary to stay the plague would be simply to take the variculous matter (the purulent matter of the disease) from off a patient, who might even be dying of the disease, and inoculate a cow upon any of the mucous surfaces, and thenceforth obtain a plentiful supply of genuine preventive vaccine lymph.

VICE A LEVELLER.

Any one of the laws of society once trodden under foot, it is vain to think of claiming the benefit of the rest. One mesh in the net let fall, the whole unravels. Where the opinion of the world has been disdained, the world repays in kind; and he who disdained it becomes a "faria," beyond the pale of social arrangements. For him, man's respect, rank, distance, the distinctions of education, fortune, exist no longer. Oh! vice is a merciless leveller.—*Pictures of the French.*

HOW TO ENFORCE SILENCE.

The officers of the Scotch criminal courts create disturbance by calling "Silence!" to the auditory. In Cork they manage the matter better; they write "Silence" in large letters on a piece of pasteboard, stick it into the cleft end of a long white rod, and wave it in the face of any one whose voice is heard rising above a whisper. If this does not produce quiescence, the admonition is enforced by a rap on the head with the rod.—*Phrenological Journal.*

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